



Milwaukee County

Board Chairman Lee Holloway

Supervisor John F. Weishan, Jr.

Supervisor Gerry Broderick

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE IGNORES ADVISORY REFERENDUM DEBATE

Scott Walker instead takes part in sales tax debate while denying taxpayers the opportunity

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway, along with Supervisors John F. Weishan, Jr., and Gerry Broderick, released the following statement in response to the County Executive's refusal to address the issue of voter participation in an advisory referendum on a sales tax increase to provide property tax relief and increased funding for parks, mass transit and public safety:

“Plain and simple, the voters should be heard. Whether you are for or against raising the sales tax to provide funding for property tax relief, parks, transit and public safety, you should be in favor of an advisory referendum on the issue. To be clear, the Board is NOT considering an increase in the sales tax at this time. In reality, we're looking at whether to LET THE VOTERS DECIDE the issue. While the County Executive has clearly expressed his opposition to enacting a sales tax increase, he is actually partaking in a debate that should occur though the referendum – a debate he wants to forbid through his veto. He has offered no reasons for opposing the advisory referendum, despite the fact that the outcome could possibly vindicate him.”

“The east side of the Milwaukee County Courthouse (facing MacArthur Square) features the following phrase, etched in stone on the frieze across the top of the building: ‘Vox populi vox dei.’ Translated in English, it reminds us that, in a democracy, ‘The voice of the people

is the voice of god.’ The County Executive should stop for a moment and consider those words, written on the very building housing his office.”

“As a refresher for the County Executive, we’d like to share that the Boston Tea Party actually started due to a *reduction* in taxes for British companies (but not colonial businesses) on imported tea, which hurt American colonists. Due to their frustration in not being able to voice their opinion, they revolted during the Boston Tea Party. This was a classic example of ignoring the voice of the people.”

“Now, 234 years later, the voice of the public is again being muted. It’s time to end that unfair silence. Civics 101 teaches us the most effective public servants are those that listen to the public’s wishes. We encourage our fellow Supervisors on the County Board to override this attempt to ignore the wishes of the voters, whatever those wishes may be. It’s time we listen. County Executive Walker, will you join us?”

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors will consider an override of the County Executive’s veto at its next meeting, Thursday at 9:30 a.m. in Room 200 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse.

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